

PLAIN TRUTH

FOR

PLAIN PEOPLE;

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN TOM AND HARRY,

AT THE DINNER HOUR,

ABOUT

DR. WARREN'S BUSINESS.

DIALOGUE I. *11 + 11*

MACCLESFIELD :

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. WRIGHT, MILL-STREET.
SOLD ALSO BY LOVE AND BARTON, MARKET-ST. MANCHESTER

1834

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DIALOGUE I.

Tom. I say, Harry, this Dr. Warren's business is making a great noise among us Methodists just now. I begin to think they have not used the Doctor well. What is your opinion?

Harry. Well, Tom, are you willing to be set right, if you are proved to be wrong; because there are some people who will believe nothing but what is on one side; and it answers no purpose to argue with them, for a man won't be convinced against his will.

T. I am willing, Harry, to reason the point with you, and am determined to judge nothing till I have heard your opinion.

H. That's honest, Tom; a man who is willing to be set right when he is wrong, and does not allow himself to be carried away by passion and prejudice, will generally be found correct at the last.

T. Thank ye, Harry, for the compliment, but now for the point in hand;—don't you think, that the Manchester folks are right in taking the Doctor's side, and that this Institution is a very wicked thing, and that the Missionary money ought not to go to it?

H. One thing at a time, Tom. You have mentioned three subjects; if we cannot discuss them all this dinner hour, we will go as far as time allows. You first ask me if the Manchester folks are right in taking the Doctor's side. Now you must not suppose that the voice of a multitude is always on the side of truth, for the multitude cried out, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and you will allow it was wrong to crucify the Prince of Life and Glory: and when men make a great noise, and are very boisterous and bad tempered about a subject, you

may set it down generally that they are wrong.—“for Passion is ever the enemy of Truth.” But what makes you think Tom that Dr. Warren is ill used ?

T. Why, he only wrote a book, and they called a District Meeting and suspended him for it.

H. Wrote a book ! Tom, but writing a book is often a very serious thing. Many have written very bad books ;—Tom Paine, you know, wrote the Age of Reason, which you allow was bad ; so that writing is often a serious matter, and Dr. Warren’s book has been proved to contain a great many misrepresentations and slanders.

T. Why, do you say so ?

H. Yes, it has been proved ; I shall perhaps point you out a few shortly. But you say the Doctor was suspended from preaching for writing a book ; this is incorrect ; He was suspended for not answering the charges at the District Meeting which were brought against him, and you know in Courts of Justice, he that does not appear to answer the charges preferred, is considered as guilty by the Court.

T. Well, Well, that is correct to be sure ; but the Manchester District Meeting was in a great hurry in calling him to account for his book ; why not let it pass on till the regular District Meeting, next May ?

H. Do you think it is right for a man who prints slander, misrepresentation, and untruth, to preach ?

T. No ; to be sure not. Let me have a man who lives the truth as well as preaches it.

H. Well, I will prove by and by that the Doctor has done this. But what would you think, Tom, of a Minister who is appointed to care for souls,—(and this ought to be the great work of every Christian Minister)—going about in a secret way, and trying to organize a party to subvert and overthrow the principles of the society and church over which he was placed as guardian and pastor ?

T. Why that it is very bad. It is as bad as that Doge, or Duke of Venice, who tried to overthrow his own country’s interests and destroy her constitution, whilst he was placed at

the head ; but history says, he was found out, and hanged for it, though he was the first man.

H. Thank ye, Tom, for the argument ; and no man, however high his station, ought to be allowed to do wrong with impunity. It is our duty to contend for the truth.

T. That's true ; but you do not mean to say that the Doctor has tried to overturn Methodism.

H. But I do mean to say so, and prove it too. Why different publications say that he has headed an association in Manchester, which has for its object the destruction of *Wesleyan* Methodism.

T. Well, I dont like that ; for though I like reform, I am a Methodist to the back bone, and as a good man said, I am determined to keep in the old ship whilst two planks hold together, and even then, I'll cling to the last plank.

H. You are very figurative, Tom, but the old ship is very sound yet ; she has stood many and many a storm, and now she sails as majestically as ever. There is no danger of her going to pieces.

T. But Dr. Warren's party only want vote by ballot, and to be allowed to send Delegates to the Conferer there is no harm in that, is there ?

H. Well Tom, do you think this would prove a reform ; let us examine this point—vote by ballot. There is a great deal of noise made just now about this. I think it would be the way to introduce corruption, for then it will not be known how people vote ; and if the people are to vote by ballot, why not the Members in the House. What is fair for one is fair for another ; and if this be the case, how could the people call their Members to account ?

T. Ah ! my lad, that's a strong argument ; I never thought of that. What, do you really think it would be a bad thing

H. To be sure I do. Secrecy affords an opportunity to do wrong—men could promise one thing and do another ; whilst the knowledge that what we do is seen and made public, is a check to corruption. In the Conference it could do no good ;

every man there has a right to his opinion, and no one is blamed for *properly* expressing it.

T. But they say there is a dominant party in the Conference, who carry every thing their own way.

H. Assertion is no proof, Tom ; and what you say, cannot be proved. The Members of the Society cannot prove it ; and the Preachers, who are the best and only evidence, deny it. — You may depend this is all a tale, got up by disappointed and envious men, who want to be in power themselves.

T. But Delegates in the Conference, Harry, would be a good thing ; they would be a check upon the Preachers.

H. Allow me to ask you a question, Tom.—Do you believe the Preachers are good men ?

T. Yes, that I do ; for God blesses their labours, they are made exceedingly useful, and I have often received good under them ; and God certainly would not honour so extensively the labours of ungodly men.

H. Well, Tom, Delegates are to be sent to Conference to watch these men, whom you allow are pious,—but does not this imply suspicion and distrust,—and why suspect and doubt such men ? If they cannot be trusted, then they are not fit to preach. I would never sit under a ministry which cannot be trusted. If we can trust them with the care of our souls, which is of first importance, surely we may leave them to manage the secondary matters of the church.

T. That staggers me, Harry, however ; it does seem reasonable, I must allow.

H. We argue, Tom, you know as thinking men, not for victory but for truth. Just another word about the Delegates. You know about forty years ago, there was a great stir about Delegates, &c., and a Preacher, called Alexander Kilham, and many people left the Old Connexion, and set up for themselves ; but I have heard of many Preachers saying that there was a great deal of contention among the Delegates, & that the poor Preachers were frequently oppressed, and sent about the kingdom, at the caprice of those men ; and, as one of them said, “ they talk a great deal about liberty, but keep it all to themselves.”

T. That's wrong, however ; for the Scriptures say Ministers should be esteemed very highly in love for their work's sake.

H. Yes, Tom ; and look at the different Societies, where Delegates are allowed. Are they better than the Old Society ? Do they prosper more ? Have they better Preachers ? Is more good done ? And are the people happier ?

T. Nay ; I always said that the Old Methodists did the most good in the world.

H. And, Tom, whether Delegates be right or wrong, they never can become Members of the Old Methodist Conference, for Mr. Wesley, in his Poll Deed, which is enrolled in Chancery, says,—“*No Person shall be elected a Member of Conference, who has not been admitted into Connexion with the Conference, as a Preacher and Expounder of God's Holy Word, for twelve months.*”

T. Well, that's a settler, however. I know good old John Wesley, bless him, was right ; I am sure I will not try to alter or disturb what he has done. But, Harry, you said that Dr. Warren wrote misrepresentations and slander ; can you prove this ?

H. I can prove it, and many other things about him. Only think, Tom, he tells us in his book that he was “*obstreperously clamoured down* by the Conference,” and at the same time and in the same book, he prints a speech, which he says he delivered at Conference, and which the Conference heard. Is not this misrepresentation ? is it not untruth ?

T. Why that seems clear to be sure. I never thought of that.

H. But there is worse than this. The following facts are proved on the evidence of twelve respectable men, (not all Preachers,) who have signed their names to Mr. Cubitt's Observations on Dr. Warren's Pamphlet, vouching for its correctness.

T. Well, let us hear.

H. Dr. Warren, in the first place, proposed that the plain Institution should be called a *College* ; this is proved.

T. That's bad, however.

H. There is more yet. The same Dr. who is so violent in his opposition to the education of the Junior Preachers, did

obtain his Doctorship, by studying at a Scotch University, and this after being appointed to the proper work of a Methodist Preacher. What do you think of that, Tom.

T. Why I begin to think that the Doctor is not faultless.—Certainly that is bad.

H. But there is more still. You know in his book he holds up to ridicule cassocked ecclesiastics, splendid rituals, &c.; the same man, when studying at the College (it is said,) wore the *Red Gown* of the Students. And a Methodist, at the Quarterly Meeting in Glasgow, said he did not want to see a Methodist Preacher running up and down the streets, with his red gown flying behind him. Now is he consistent in his opposition?

T. Well, that is singular. The Dr. must be rather unprincipled (as one said) I almost think.

H. But there is worse than this, Tom. You know he talks in his book a great deal against Mr. Bunting, and says he wants to introduce a dominant, tyrannical, and dictatorial power, chiefly by means of this Institution.

T. He does say so.

H. Now Tom, what I tell you is true, whether you believe me or not. He that talks thus, actually *did vote* for Mr. Bunting being President; and not satisfied with a silent vote, said to Mr. B. "I assure you, I heartily concur in the resolution."

T. And is that proved?

H. It is so; and it is somewhat strongly suspected, that he gave this vote that he might have Mr. Bunting's place, as Secretary to the Missions.

T. Well, I have done with him now: and I am sorry that I did not see you before I gave him my support.

H. Yes, Tom, and many more will be sorry when they know the whole business. But I should like to have a few words with you on the Institution.

T. I shall be happy to converse with you another day; but my time is up,

FAREWELL.

. Dialogue II. will appear shortly.

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CONCERNING

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DIALOGUE II.

Harry. Well, Tom, have you thought any thing more of our last conversation ?

Tom. I have indeed, Harry ; and am obliged to you for the light you have thrown upon the subject. I feel sorry that Dr. Warren has acted so improperly. It is a misfortune when a man, who has been a minister so many years, and maintained so blameless a character, becomes an instrument of mischief in his latter days.

H. You are right, Tom ; and the fact should teach us the necessity of continual watchfulness ; for the wise man said truly "Pride goeth before destruction ; and a haughty spirit before a fall." And perhaps all this misfortune of the poor Doctor's may be traced to pride ; at all events, there is one circumstance which I did not tell you before, that seems to prove this.

T. Indeed ! What is that ?

H. Why, at one of the Committee Meetings, which consisted of twenty members, they conversed about the proper persons for masters ; (this was after the Doctor had voted for Mr. Bunting,—they wanted two beside him,) and the Doctor mentioned two that were likely.

T. Well, what harm was there in that ?

H. Hear me, Tom ;—some other Members of the Committee mentioned three other names, quite as likely ; and it so happened, do you know, that the 19 Committee-men agreed to recommend these three persons, and the Dr.'s two were laid aside at that time, which was no reflection upon them at all, for as there were five names introduced to make a selection from, and only two wanted, three must be left.

T. Of course ;—that's plain enough ;—but what has that to do with Dr. Warren.

H. You see the nineteen men were quite of one opinion, (and many of them were as old, as learned, and as respectable, as the Doctor himself ;) but because the nineteen would not give way to one, (that is to the Doctor) he took offence directly, began to use hard words, such as "*party spirit*" "*worldly policy*" "*dishonourable intrigue*," and here began his opposition to the Institution.

T. That does not look well ; it seems as though he thought his opinion ought to be taken, and the opinion of nineteen cast aside.

H. Yes, Tom ; that confirms my view, that the origin of Dr. Warren's fall was most likely pride ; and you must know, that it was at this time, when the Doctor turned round all at once from being a warm friend of the Institution, to a determined enemy, that Mr. Bunting said, it was unprincipled opposition, that is opposition without principle.

T. Why, who would not say so, Eh ! it seems like a weathercock that is turned by every wind. Why it is as bad as Peel, who had been a strong enemy to Catholic Emancipation, turning round at once, and voting for a measure which he had all his life spoken against.

H. Yes ; but there is more excuse for Sir R. Peel ; there seemed to be some necessity for, and hence propriety in, his conduct ; while Dr. Warren's turning seems altogether to arise from disappointed pride.

T. But, Harry, you promised last time we met, that we should have some conversation about this Institution, there is half an hour left, and I should like to have your views upon the subject.

H. With all my heart, Tom. I like, as far as I am able, to satisfy an enquirer after truth.

T. Well, it is said there is no necessity for this Institution to educate the Preachers in ;—what do you think about it ?

H. Why absolute necessity there may not be ; but the question is, as I think, whether it would be of general advantage. It augurs an indifferent and careless spirit to say, I can do without a thing that would benefit me if I possessed it.

T. True. But will this Institution be of any service ? will it not do more harm than good, think you ?

H. Well, Tom, the subject is well worth our deliberate attention. Leaving Dr. Warren and the present excitement out of the question, let you and I calmly and impartially consider the subject.

T. With all my heart, Harry, I love truth, and am willing to be set right, if I am wrong.

H. You ask,—Will not the Institution do more harm than good. Perhaps it will be as well to consider the supposed harm and the probable good ;—then we may be able to draw our conclusions.

T. Yes ; let us put the Institution into the balances of truth, and see if it will not be found wanting.

H. We will. Then begin with the supposed harm it will do. What harm do you think is likely to be occasioned ?

T. Why, they say that man is to make Preachers, and not God Almighty ; now I like God to make Preachers.

H. To be sure ; and perish that system and that Institution

that would introduce learning to the destruction of Religion, or that would place a polished and pedantic ministry in the room of that plain, energetic, & experimental ministry that we now have.

T. I say, Amen to that however! that is exactly my view!

H. But this, Tom, is not likely to be the case,—only examine how Preachers are to be made, (to use your own phrase.) I suppose you are acquainted with the different ordeals through which the Candidates for the ministry have to pass.

T. Not very particularly; I shall be glad to have more light on that subject.

H. Well, before any man can become a Preacher amongst the Methodists, he must be converted to God; he must evidence this conversion, by his life and conduct; must be a changed man; and a member of the Society.

T. Yes; you mean must have old things passed away, and all things become new,—as the Scriptures say. I like that.

H. Well, he must then, (if he thinks he is called to preach) be taken on trial for never less than six, generally twelve months, before he can be a Local Preacher. You know the meaning of Local Preacher.

T. To be sure I do; they preach occasionally, receiving no pay for what they do. They are a worthy set of fellows; working all the week at a trade, and preaching on a Sunday for nothing. Ah! and I have heard them preach some famous sermons too.

H. Yes, Tom, Methodism owes a great deal to these men; they are very valuable, very disinterested, generally, and very useful. Well, a Candidate for the ministry must be on trial as a Local Preacher; then he must be examined by the Travelling and Local Preachers, at their Meeting, as to belief of Methodist doctrines, soundness in the faith, conversion to God, moral character, attention to discipline, & abilities for the work.

T. My word, poor fellow, but that is a fine sieve for him to go through.

H. Yes, but they are more strict than that with Candidates for the itinerant ministry. These have to pass the Quarterly Meeting (that is a Meeting of the Representatives of the town and country Societies,) and without a majority of voters in favour of him, the Candidate cannot come out.

T. That's a famous guard however. What then the Preachers cannot make one another without the people's leave.

H. Certainly not; no man becomes a Travelling Preacher that is not recommended by the Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit, in which he lives; then he has to pass the District Meeting.

T. What do you mean by a District Meeting?

H. A Meeting of Preachers from several neighbouring towns, at one place, to deliberate on the state of the Societies

in their own towns, or in that particular District ; this makes them call it a District Meeting.

T. I understand you.

H. Well, here the Candidate is examined in the same way as at the Local Preacher's Meeting, but much more minutely and strictly ; and if he passes here, he is recommended to the Conference, (the great annual meeting) and if the Conference accepts of him, he is put on the List of Reserve, to be called fully into the work as a regular Preacher, when there is a suitable opening.

T. That is strict, however ; I should think a hypocrite or a bad Preacher could hardly get out. They will find out whom God calls, by such means. But we are wandering, Harry ;—let us come to the Institution.

H. Have patience, Tom ; I shall come to the point. These Preachers after this are kept four years on trial, and every year examined ; and at the end of the four years examined more strictly than ever, before they are ordained, or, as the Methodists call it, received into full connexion.

T. But what has this to do with the Institution ?

H. Now I'll tell you. Sometimes, you see, the Candidates are one or two years before they are wanted as Preachers ; and though they know they shall be wanted, have to follow their trade, (and many of them work hard for a living,) when they may be called upon at any time to go and preach to numerous and respectable congregations. Now don't you think it would be better if there was some Institution, or School, or Academy, where these young men could read, and meditate, and learn, and so prepare themselves a little more for the ministry ?

T. Aye ; that could not do much harm ; but perhaps they are not to pass through all these trials and sieves that you have been talking of, after there is an Institution, but they will be made Preachers by the College at once ?

H. There you are mistaken. They are to be brought forward in precisely the same manner ; and in addition to all this, the Committee of the Institution, consisting of many old and talented Preachers and other pious gentlemen, not Preachers, are to examine the young men again, and have power to say to the Conference, " we think such a one not fit for the itinerant ministry."

T. Why then the way will be closer than ever ; I could never get through it, I am sure.

H. Whom God calls to the work is sure to pass, Tom. God will call none but those who are qualified ; and those whom God does not call are better found out and sent back.

T. True, true ; that's right to be sure. Then the Institution I see will be an additional guard upon the mi-

another lock put upon the door, aye, to keep bad ones out. But is it not dangerous for so many as twenty or thirty young men to get together? Are they not likely to corrupt one another?

H. Why Tom you may suppose anything. Everything on earth is liable to error; but it seems the Conference has endeavoured to secure this point as much as possible.

T. How so?

H. Why Conference has appointed a House-Governor, who is to be the regular Weekly Class Leader of the young Preachers, and to take every opportunity of promoting their personal piety. So you see they are to meet in class every week; and to be watched over and advised by good old Mr. Entwistle, who is to be the House-Governor.

T. Well, I like that. Class Meeting is a good thing; that is keeping up Old Methodism.

H. To be sure it is; and young men, going out, some of them from poor trades and mechanical employments, especially if they are a little popular, are in great danger of being lifted up with pride, when they go into a Circuit without any previous preparation; whereas in the Institution they will meet with many equal and some superior to themselves, and will gain proper views of men and things.

T. Come, I feel a little more satisfied that the Institution is not so bad; but won't they be in danger of forgetting how to preach, if they are to be kept there for two years?

H. Two years! yes, two years; they will never be there longer. And forgetting how to preach! No danger of that, when they will have as much, and most likely more, preaching to do, than when they were Local Preachers. They are to be employed in preaching about the streets, and in the dark and uncultivated parts of London every Sabbath day; and the introduction of so many pious young men to that great and ungodly city, will prove no small blessing to it.

T. Ah! I never knew that. What, they are to keep using their sword then. That's right; for there is danger of it rusting when it remains too long in the scabbard.

H. They will have plenty of work; will be watched over as to their personal piety and improvement in learning, constantly; so that they cannot easily take much harm, and will certainly receive much good.

T. But will the Institution do much good? We have gone on very well, and you know the Epitaph—

“I was well, I wanted to be better,
I took physic, and died.”

T. Well, Tom, in many places Methodism has gone on well; and take it as a whole, no system has prospered so much; but in some respects we have not got on so well.

How often do we hear of people complaining, especially in poor Circuits, that their Chapels are only half filled ; that the Trustees are burdened with debt, and that the Preachers are not acceptable ?

T. That I have heard many times.

H. Yes, Tom ; and they say that at the Conference there is a great deal of trouble in stationing the Preachers : for the large Circuits say—we must have good and clever Preachers, for we have popular Church and Dissenting Ministers to compete with ; and the poor Circuits say—we have heavy debts and small societies, and we want better Preachers ; but the poor Circuits generally get the worst Preachers.

T. Yes, yes ; the weakest go to the wall, as the old saying is.

H. And if the poor Circuits could be heard to speak, many of them would say,—let us have an Institution or any thing else that will bring us better Preachers, and help to raise the cause of God among us.

T. Well, well, in that respect it may be right ; for I think the large Circuits, who always get good Preachers, ought not to be judges, for they have Newton, and Bunting, and Crowther, and many besides ; and they do not see so much the need as the poorer Circuits, who are never favoured with such men.

H. Why, Tom, you are coming round to my side.

T. Nay, nay, not quite ; for they say Mr. Wesley objected to the Institution, and I am sure he was right.

H. You may depend this is a mistake ; so far from being an enemy, he was a friend and promoter of such Institutions.

T. Proof, proof ; I'll not believe that without proof.

H. Neither do I wish you Tom ; and I have abundant proof. In the Minutes of Conference in 1744, corrected by Mr. John Wesley, it is asked, “ Can we have a Seminary for labourers ? ” and the answer is, “ If God spare us till next Conference. ”—The next year the subject is resumed,—“ Can we have a Seminary for labourers ? ” Answer—“ Not till God give us a proper tutor. ” So you see it was only delayed at that time for want of a proper tutor. What do you say to that, Tom ?

T. That seems like proof to be sure.

H. Yes, Tom ; and he encouraged and sanctioned Mr. Benson, who was at the College of Lady Huntingdon, at Trevecka, in Wales ; and he patronized Mr. Heath, the Head-Master of Cokesbury College, in America ; and then you know he sent Mr. Brettell, Mr. Thomas Cooper, and Dr. Clarke to the Institution at Kingswood.

T. That's true, to be sure ; he could not have been so much of an enemy to it after all.

H. An enemy ! he was a warm friend. He himself educated in a College, so were the pious John Fletch

George Whitfield. Mr. Wesley was a patron of learning ; and don't you think it a disgrace to his followers to object to such an Institution, especially in this day, when education is generally allowed to be good, when Sunday Schools are so well supported, and Mechanics' Institutions are formed. It seems as though there was a wish to have the people wiser than their teachers ; and to me appears rather discreditable both to the taste and piety of some of the Methodists.

T. Why, it does seem curious ; but they do it for conscience sake.

H. Many do, no doubt, and therefore should be respected ; but it is to be feared, Tom, that some make it only a pretext for attacking Methodism,

T. That is not my case, I am sure. But will it not be a great expence, and is it not an additional tax upon the people ?

H. Tax is a wrong word, Tom ; the Methodists are never taxed with any thing ; the whole system is a voluntary one, and to every fund in Methodism, you may give or not give, just as you please. But for this Institution there will be no public collection, and the generality of the people will not be asked to give a farthing to it, while they will gain all the advantages which it is likely to bestow.

T. Then you do think the Institution is a good thing ?

H. Certainly I do ; and that it will, with God's blessing, raise Methodism to a higher state of usefulness and glory than ever it has yet reached.

T. God grant it may. But is it not a new thing ? I like good Old Methodism best.

H. No, Tom ; not new in principle, for you know Mr. Wesley approved of it, and it is not contrary to Methodism, but only carrying out its principles. Methodism is a growing system, and a system that has arisen out of circumstances in all its parts. There was great opposition made to Missionary Meetings ; this was called a novelty, and it was said it would destroy the simplicity of Methodism.

T. But that was not true ; for I like a good Missionary Meeting, and to hear about the poor heathens ; and often get good at them. Well, I do think better of it, Harry, and am convinced by what you say that it may be a blessing, only there is taking these Missionary monies to support it.

H. That is not true, Tom ; but we must converse on this part of the subject another day.

T. Good day to you, and thank ye ; we will meet again at dinner hour to-morrow, to talk it over, **FAREWELL.**

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1834.

DIALOGUE III.

Tom. Well, Harry, have you half an hour to spare this dinner hour ; our last conversation was so satisfactory to my mind, and, as I still have a few lingering doubts about these Missionaries, and want to be sure that all is right, I shall be glad to talk with you again on the subject.

Harry. Yes, Tom ; our conversations have been of service to both, because we did not fortify our minds against conviction and truth by prejudice ; for “ prejudice has neither eyes nor ears ;” and if men would only suspend their judgment, until they hear both sides of a subject, there would be much less mischief done in the world.

T. Come, come, Harry, I am not going to let you have it all your own way, either ; there is a great deal said against the Missionary monies going to the support of the Institution ; it is not all wrong, I should think ?

H. Why, Tom, you said you were satisfied that the Institution was a good thing, and you must not think, that because a subject is much and hastily talked about, therefore it is just ; for there are some men you know who fulfil the poet's words—

“ Whether he knew the thing or no,
His tongue eternally would go,—
For he had impudence at will.”

And there are persons of this sort, who will make up by impudence what they are short in sense.

T. Now I have a great mind to be offended at you, Harry ; do you mean to be personal ?

H. I do not mean to offend you, Tom ; neither to apply these remarks to you ; for in our conversations, though you were a little prejudiced, you have been open to conviction.

T. Well, well, I am satisfied ; you are a fine fellow for getting round a corner Harry ;—but now about these Missionaries.

H. You mean, I suppose Tom ; the application of Missionary money to the support of the Institution.

T. To be sure I do ; and think it has no right to be applied to such a purpose.

H. Gently Tom ; we must be calm. You know we must let reason take the helm, and prudence trim our sails, and we shall land in the port of truth at last.

T. That is good ; well now I will not be prejudiced, but hear you patiently.

H. You allow that the Missionary cause is good.

T. Good, to be sure I do; one of the finest things in the world. Why only think how many poor heathens have received the light of religion; which (to use your own figure) has guided the immortal passenger within, (through the hull has been wrecked and the timbers shattered) into the haven of eternal rest.

H. Why you are becoming eloquent, Tom; you allow the Missionary cause to be a good thing.

T. I say I do, and worthy of support.

H. This we are convinced all will allow; and men should be careful how (though feigned or real grievance) they withhold their support from a cause which has had so many proofs of the Divine favour, which has spread so much light in the world, and which is the fulfilment of a Divine command. But you say the Missionary money ought not to be applied to the Institution.

T. Certainly; it should be sacredly appropriated to the purposes for which it was given.

H. And so it will be, Tom,—every farthing of it. You give your money I suppose, that men, properly qualified, should go and preach the Gospel to the heathen world.

T. Yes; I should think a Missionary needs some preparation more than a Preacher at home. I allow that.

H. Well, he has difficult languages to learn, which he must have an acquaintance with before he can preach at all. Now, whether is it better, Tom, for a young man to gain as much preparatory knowledge as he can at home, or to go out in inhospitable climes, and under the rays of a vertical sun, or amidst pestilential winds, and gain this preparation.

T. Why, better to gain the knowledge at home, to be sure.

H. For knowledge of the native language where he is going to labour, he must have. Yes Tom, and there have been Missionaries who have gone abroad without much previous preparation, have had to employ one or two years in acquiring a language, and by the time they have been able to preach, their constitutions have been undermined, their strength has failed, and they have had to return home when they should have commenced their labours.

T. That is a serious matter; what an expence to the Mission funds that must have been.

H. Certainly; so that the principle of giving Missionary Candidates as much preparatory learning as possible is a good one.

T. I allow that.

H. And this principle has been acted upon for some years past by the Missionary Committee. Young men have been instructed, but not efficiently; and there needed an Institution or something of the kind for the Missionary Candidates especially.

T. How do you make that appear?

to be lodged and boarded at a considerable expence, lost much time in walking up and down the streets of that great city, and had to learn without much system or order ; hence precious time was wasted, and the young men would be more exposed to the temptations of a great city. Whereas, now they will board at one table, dwell together under one roof, be constantly watched over as to progress, by pious and learned men. Is not this more reasonable than the former plan ?

T. Well, Harry, I never saw it in that light ; if that be true, certainly there seems to be advantages in the Institution.

H. And you say, Tom, that the Missionary monies ought not to go to the establishment and support of the Institution.

T. I did say so.

H. To the Establishment not a farthing of Missionary money will go, and those who circulate such an untruth, must be accountable to God (who is a lover of truth) for wicked slanderous misrepresentations. There is now a considerable amount given, without solicitation, by pious and liberal men, towards establishing the Institution, without touching the Mission fund or any other ; though as their will be Missionary Candidates receiving instruction regularly there, it would have been quite right if the Missionary money had been in part paid towards the establishment of an Institution, which is to benefit Missionary Candidates.

T. Why that seems reasonable enough, Harry : You are a clever fellow ; you throw new light upon the subject ; you are like the Sun in the firmament that chases the darkness away.

H. Tom, the light of truth must and will prevail over the darkness of error. We have said that not a farthing of the Missionary money is to be paid to the establishment of the Institution.

T. Yes ; but are they not going to give too much a year towards its support ? they say a thousand pounds is to be paid annually towards it.

H. Such assertions are made by prejudiced men, who will not seek for the truth. The Missionary Committee will only pay such a portion of the annual expence “ as may be judged a fair remuneration for the advantages which the Missionary Society will derive from it in the education of the Missionary Candidates.”

T. Explain yourself a little more clearly, Harry.

H. Well. You understand if there be one Missionary Candidate, they will pay for one ; if two they will pay for two ; and so on in proportion ; but it is not arranged for there to be more than ten Missionary Candidates at a time in the Institution.

T. But will they not pay too much for every man ?

H. Well, let us weigh the matter. It is thought that about £75 a year per each man ought to be paid ; now that I am sure Tom is not too much. The expences in London are greater than expences in the country.

T. Yes ; in that you are correct.

H. Well, £75 a year is not too much to be paid for young men, who must necessarily occasion considerable expence, getting ready for important stations abroad.

T. And do you say that is the way they will take ?

H. I do. It is the manner in which the Committee intend to act. If there is one at the Institution, and at times there may be such a call for Missionaries abroad, as not to allow even one to be there ;—when that is the case, they will pay nothing, and will only pay in proportion to the number of Candidates that receive instruction.

T. Why Harry, you astonish me. Nobody ever told me that. Are you sure you are right ?

H. I am quite sure the Missionary Committee pay just in proportion to the number of Candidates they have in the Institution, and in no other way.

T. Why then I have been greatly deceived, and I am indeed much obliged to you for that information. I love the Missionary cause I am sure ; and they shall have my penny a week still.

H. It affords me pleasure, Tom, to find you so open to conviction ; but I have not done with the subject yet.

T. What else have you to say ?

H. We said, you remember Tom, that the Missionary Committee had acted on the principle of giving as much preparatory learning to the young Missionaries (before they went abroad) for many years past, as circumstances would allow.

T. True, true.

H. But the plan of giving them this instruction was so desultory and irregular, as not only to be worse for the Candidates, (in as much as they could not get on in learning as fast as desirable,) but it was a great deal more expensive than the present method will be.

T. What, do you mean to say that there will no more money go to this Institution than was paid before for the instruction and support of the Candidates in London ?

H. I mean to say that so far from this, there will be an actual saving of money. It has been calculated that £250 or £300 a year will be saved to the Missionary Committee by the Institution.

T. Why this astonishes me more and more. Is it not surprising that I should have been so prejudiced against this cause ? I am very sorry that I was. I hope God will forgive me. I opposed it in ignorance, that I did.

H. You will be forgiven, for yours is not wilful ignorance ; but there are men, who go about and represent these things under false colours, knowing their representations to be false ; and this for the purpose of seducing the unwary, making pros-

to a certain party, and thus spreading discord, suspicion, and offences, in the Church of Christ, who will have a fearful account to give at the last day.

T. I think so too, Harry; for the future I shall be more careful how I form hasty opinions, and draw rash conclusions on any subject,—for on this subject I have been deceived. But the saving of money surprises me most. Why, the report is that they are going to take the Missionary money to support an Institution. I thought it was to be wasted and mispent at home to the neglect of the work abroad! Why, the Committee and Conference deserve a vote of thanks for saving our money.

H. They do, Tom, deserve the sincere and affectionate thanks of every lover of Methodism and every lover of the Missionary cause, but in this case they are suffering for righteousness sake. And the cry about their wasting and misapplying Missionary money, is a base and mischievous slander.

T. So it seems to be.

H. Yes, it is a snare of the devil. Never were their such bright prospects in the Missionary field as at this moment.—Slavery is abolished in the West Indies, and the prospects there are more cheering than ever before. In British North America, the work of God is going on amongst the Indians, (the poor native Americans.) In the South Sea Islands, hundreds and thousands are saved, and there is a general call for more labourers. In Southern and Western Africa, the fields are white for the harvest; never were there such openings before. Persecution abroad seems to have worn itself out at the present.—Never was the indication of good so cheering. East, West, North, and South, there are openings for Missionary enterprise. There is almost an universal cry to Christians at home of “come over and help us.” Accounts are reaching us almost every month of societies enlarged, chapels built, heathens embracing Christianity, dying in the faith, and passing into glory.

T. Aye, Harry, that’s good; it warms my heart, praised be God. I love the Missionary cause better and better.

H. And amidst all these opening prospects, and these pleasing signs of the times, the devil has set a snare for the church at home, and many have fallen into it.

T. Yes, and I was one; but thank God I am got out again, and I will do more for the Missionary cause than ever, I am determined.

H. It is to be hoped many others will get out of it; for the harm will be to themselves, not to the cause of Missions. I have no fear for that; it is God’s cause; it shall not be destroyed like Moses’ Bush,—the flame shall not consume it. It shall still “Flourish unconsumed by fire.”

T. You are right, Harry; neither Methodism nor the Mis-

what opposition Methodism, in all her parts, has had with from the beginning. Mr. Wesley and the first converts were persecuted by the world. It is said that Dr. W. had great hardships in the commencement of the Mission. His name was cast out as evil. It was reported that he was a man of the money, and many other senseless and wicked things were made against him. You see those who have gone to their long home, and the cause has

H. Yes, yes ; while the world remains Methodist, pursuing her old and Christian principle,—the mission is the enemy of none,—and she shall not be destroyed. The blessing is on her. And you say, Tom, that Methodism was persecuted by the world in former times ; but in our times it suffers most from her own professed members. But her true enemies and false friends shall alike fail in their purpose to injure her.

T. Amen, so say I.

H. But Tom, there is another view of the Missionary cause, which I wish you to see.

T. Now Harry, don't be too hard upon me ; I am satisfied that the cause is very good, and will be a better friend to it than before.

H. What I am going to say does not apply to you. It is to shew the unreasonableness of those who oppose the Institution.

T. Well what is it ?

H. Why those that object to the Institution, recommend that no money whatever be paid to the Missionary cause. Now, allowing for the sake of argument that it is wrong so to appropriate the Missionary money, it has never been said by the worst enemy that more than £1,000 a year was to be paid out of the Missionary Fund towards its support.

T. That is the sum stated.

H. Well, now the income of the Society is about £50,000 a year : take £1,000 from this, there remains £49,000 that they allow is rightly used, that goes to the right and proper purposes.

T. Yes.

H. Now I ask you, Tom, supposing it was bad, would it be fair, because one part out of fifty was not rightly used, to withhold the other 49 parts ?

T. Certainly not.

H. The opposers, then, to be consistent, ought only to withhold a fiftieth part of their contributions. If they gave a shilling, one farthing, at the outside, is all they should withhold ; and not take away 49 good parts because one part is not good,—supposing it was so, which it is not.

T. That is quite reasonable and clear, and nothing can excuse any man for withdrawing his support entirely from the Missionary cause.

and if all were to act as a few have done, in
 sing to give, what would become of the poor
 and their wives, and their children. They would
 to perish on barbarous shores, after many of
 had pledged themselves to support them and
 Now that upwards of 200 Missionaries are in
 the world,—and as
 luminaries, chase the gloom of hellish night.”
 field to be abandoned,—Christian enterprise to
 heathens to be left to perish,—and universal dark-
 prevail? Is this state of things to be? Such
 case, if the principles of these “grand association
 to come into general operation. Such a scheme is
 the bottomless pit.

any, Harry, it is truly a bad affair; that would be cruel;
 yes, cruel indeed.

H. Yes; and were not men very far fallen from grace, they
 could not recommend such conduct. Now, I consider it a very
 awful thing to withdraw a farthing from God's cause. The gold
 and the silver are his, and we are only his stewards. He can
 soon blast the prospects and wither the hopes of those, who
 from passion or prejudice withhold their support. He can send
 affliction and losses, to cost them far more than they gave to
 his cause.

T. That is indeed true. May I be saved from such an evil.

H. I have lately thought much on those solemn words of
 Scripture, and have been afraid that God would apply them to
 some of the parties engaged in this unrighteous disturbance.

T. What is that?

H. “Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord: curse
 ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to
 the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord, against the
 mighty.”

T. That is indeed an awful passage. I think it would
 be better if we were to attend more to the Scriptures, and
 regulate our own lives by their threatenings and promises;
 there would not be so much danger of going astray.

H. You are right, Tom. “The fear of God is the begin-
 ning of wisdom;” and the word of God would prove to men,
 did they prayerfully seek guidance from it, an infallible light
 and directory.

T. Well, Harry, I am much obliged to you for these con-
 versations. I feel more than ever determined to cleave to
 Methodism and support the Missions; and if I want any more
 information on any subject, I shall come to you again.

H. I shall always be happy to converse with you, Tom.

FAREWELL.